

## **Onslow College PTA - AGM Chair Report – 2017**

Kia ora and welcome to the AGM of the Onslow College Parent Teacher Association.

The committee supported the college in a number of ways through the year, by providing service from the parent community to school events. This is vital work and just another way that home & school can work collaboratively together.

Every year sees a change of committee members. For some, their time at Onslow comes to an end as their children leave school. For others their day jobs dictate and free time is swallowed up, and for some, family commitments just don't allow them to hold a committee position. But in all cases, people willingly give time they do have to help where they can and work with others to bring events together and for this we can be very grateful.

Some people may not be aware of the Willing Helpers List – this database of keen helpers is regularly updated and can be tapped into, to engage help at individual events. The idea of being able to say “yes” when the diary allows or press delete to an email requesting help – suits many people. This is also a good way for parents to feel like they are contributing while not having to sign up to the committee itself. We need to make sure the parent community are aware that they can support in this way, as it helps share the volunteer load and not over commit committee members.

December 2017 saw the departure of several long standing committee members as their youngest children finished at Onslow College.

Ka pū te ruha, ka hao te rangatahi (As an old net withers another is remade)  
This also translates as, “When an elder is no longer fit to lead, a healthier leader will stand in his place”

We farewelled Kate Koch – who had served 8 ½ years on the committee. In her time at OC, Kate led as Co-Chair for 6 years and held a number of roles within the committee. Kate attended a record number of events and frequently volunteered her time. Kate was also committed and hard working with the hockey committee and gave many hours to the school library and stocking PTA supplies as well.

Kirsty Hosie had served 6 ½ years on the committee as she ended her time at Onslow. She was a most capable and efficient Secretary and could turn the meeting minutes around in record time.

Jo Ager had served 8 years on the committee and was another hard worker. As well as helping at many events and ably taking photos for the PTA memory book, Jo maintained the library roster. This she kept current to ensure the librarians were released each day by parent volunteers, so they could attend morning tea with other school staff members.

Other committee post holders were our Treasurer, Lynda Murray – who worked hard to balance the books and get reports ready for meeting approval. Volunteers Co-ordinator - Helen Hughes, who has continued to maintain the database and streamline the process of matching volunteers to roles at various events through the year and myself who remained on the committee to chair committee meetings ( Kate was unable to do this due to a clash with hockey commitments.) and to make up raffle baskets for various events..

There are of course other committee members who are not post holders. Whether it be attending meetings to share ideas and lend support, taking a lead role at 1 off events, or helping to serve as a parent volunteer, we are grateful to everyone who steps forward to help. There is plenty of room for all!

Last year we welcomed some new faces to the committee and already several have taken on roles of responsibility. Welcome Liane Lee, Caroline Masters, Viv Harris, Karen Lum Frances Kuo, Shelley Kininmonth and David Layburn. We hope you enjoy being involved with the Onslow PTA during your time at the college.

As always, we would also like to thank the following people for their continued support of PTA matters. Sherie (Principal's PA) Graeme (College Caretaker), Darrin in the school canteen, the Office Staff & Accounts team and our wonderful deputies: Warren Henderson, Janet Glenn and Penny Kinsella. On top of everything else they do, they never fail to recognise the work of the PTA and we appreciate them for this.

As you all already know, Peter is an amazing Principal. He is also a great advocate and supporter of parent contribution across the college and the PTA is 1 example of this. Peter regularly attends PTA meetings, presents informative reports and listens to

our concerns and feedback. He is approachable and supportive of our work and we thank him for this. Peter, you work tirelessly for the college, attend an amazing amount of school events both during the week, after hours and on even on weekends! We would like to acknowledge you for the time and effort you conscientiously give to our college and our students.

#### **PTA initiatives:**

Judi Harrison led the Year 9 Tea again where new students and their families are welcomed to the college. This again proved as a successful evening, with new parents, students and staff meeting and mixing in a relaxed social way.

Amanda Fraser, who is Victoria Universities Senior Student Finance Advisor, gave parents and students an overview of tertiary costs and some timely advice on how best to prepare for & manage student debt.

In conjunction with Linda Eastman (School Councillor) we were pleased to host Kealagh Robinson & Marc Wilson from the School of Psychology at Victoria University for a parent education evening on Emotion Regulation. These speakers were well received and gave valuable information and education around this important topic.

A committee decision was made early in 2017 to provide naturally flavoured water at events rather than the Raro juice that had previously been offered. New water dispensers were purchased and water flavoured with cucumber & mint, orange or lemon slices, now proudly support a “less sugar” option to both students and parents.

Liane Lee suggested and was pivotal in launching an Onslow PTA Facebook page. The inclusion of social media is a new venture for the PTA and we welcomed Liane’s ideas and input. Any new platform for engaging with parents can only a good one. Thanks to Liane for continuing to monitor parent responses.

#### **Supporting roles:**

PTA volunteers have helped at the following:

Powhiri (to mark the start of the school year), Parent Conferences Evenings (where teachers are served with much needed refreshments) and the Yamamura Japanese exchange student lunch. Refreshments were served at the Open Evening, NCEA information evening, Sports Awards, the Love Me Not parent education evening and the Leavers Assembly.

The PTA supported the student led Celebration of Success Awards by handing around food platters and awarding the PTA trophy to Raquel Abolins-Reid for her significant contribution with the student community through the year.

Volunteers have also been provided to help at both the Sports Office Stocktake and the end of year Senior Clearance Day.

#### **Income and Spending:**

Parents were again given the opportunity to donate money via an online payment system. This is a popular way for parents to make a financial contribution if they wish. The \$1,230.00 raised in 2017 paid for some additional “flip seating” in the maths block and 2 of the “new look” water fountains. The flip seats get daily use by students both during class and break time. The 2 water fountains were purchased in collaboration with the B.O.T (Board of Trustees) in 2016, when 5 fountains were purchased in total. The fountains have been installed around the college. These sturdy fountains look great and will most definitely benefit many students each day.

In addition to this, PTA agreed to the purchase of the PCSchool app that parents and students will be introduced to during 2018. This app will allow access to the school website and parent portal on mobile phones and other similar devices.

As well as the parent donations, a steady source of income continues to come from our raffle basket sales at various events held through the year. Last year \$1,204 was collected.

This is my final report as Acting Chair. Kate and I wish you all well for the coming year and know that the committee has many wonderful people ready and waiting to carry on the good work of presenting a parent face & voice for the college.

Regards

Karen Doogan & Kate Koch